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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/014,736	12/11/2001	William E. Foltz	53934US010	7050

7590 12/24/2003

Office of Intellectual Property Counsel
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St. Paul, MN 55133-3427

EXAMINER

GITOMER, RALPH J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1651

DATE MAILED: 12/24/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/014,736

Applicant(s)

FOLTZ ET AL.

Examiner

Ralph Gitomer

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 October 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-88 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-15 and 28-88 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 16-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 5) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

Applicant's election without traverse of Group II, claims 16-27, in Paper No. 2 is acknowledged. Please update the specification regarding related cases. Please inform the examiner to how the CIP applications differ to properly assess the priority date of this application. The earliest priority claimed is 6/2/98. And please inform the examiner of any other related applications, pending, allowed or abandoned. The IDS has been considered.

A reading of the specification reveals the point of novelty may reside in the addition of a sterilant resistant chemical added to the spores to make the enzyme detected in the spores more resistant to inactivation by the specific type of sterilization performed. This technical feature has not been taught or fairly suggested in the references cited herein.

Claims 16-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 16(d) "capable of" does not recite what actually occurs. Claim 17 fails to further limit claim 16 from which it depends.

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The following prior art pertinent to applicant's disclosure is made of record and not relied upon:

Foltz (5,223,401) teaches a sterility indicator.

Matner (6,623,955) teaches a biological indicator.

Albert (5,866,356) teaches a sterility indicator.

Wicks (4,883,641) teaches a sterility indicator.

Witcher (US 2003/0215923 A1) may be a related application.

Matner (US 2003/0077688 A1) may be a related application.

Foltz (6,355,448) may be a related application.

Matner (5,073,488) teaches a sterility indicator.

Matner (US 2003/0157588 A1) teaches a sterility indicator.

Witcher (6,566,090) teaches a sterility indicator.

Imburgia (5,750,184) teaches a sterility indicator.

Matner ((5,252,484) teaches a biological indicator.

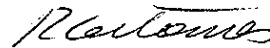
Matner (5,418,167) teaches a biological indicator.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ralph Gitomer whose telephone number is (703) 308-0732. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Wityshyn can be reached on (703) 308-1235. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 308-4556.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1235.



Ralph Gitomer
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1651

RALPH GITOMER
PRIMARY EXAMINER
GROUP 1200